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GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-first session
Agenda item 39
THE SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-first year

Letter dated 30 October 1996 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to enclose herewith the text of the Tehran Declaration, adopted at the Regional Conference on Afghanistan, which was held at Tehran on 29 and 30 October 1996.

It would be highly appreciated if this letter and its annex were circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 39, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Majid TAKHT-RAVANCHI
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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ANNEX

Tehran Declaration, adopted at the Regional Conference on Afghanistan, held at Tehran on 29 and 30 October 1996

Following the escalation of internal hostilities in Afghanistan, and on the initiative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, a Regional Conference on Afghanistan was held at Tehran on 29 and 30 October 1996. The Foreign Ministers, Ministers and Special Envoys of India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the People's Republic of China, the Republic of Kazakstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Tajikistan, the Republic of Turkey, the Russian Federation and Turkmenistan, as well as the Special Representatives of the Secretaries-General of the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference and observers from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the European Union, participated in the Conference.

In two days of meetings, the participants carried out extensive consultations on the various aspects of the situation in Afghanistan, particularly in the light of recent developments.

The Conference expressed concern at the escalation of armed hostilities in Afghanistan, which had resulted in immense human losses and irreparable damage to the country in the economic, social and cultural spheres, and endangered regional peace, stability and security.

The Conference deplored recent flagrant violations of human rights in Afghanistan, particularly the rights of women, and called for an immediate end to such practices in conformity with the relevant provisions of the Charter of the United Nations.

The Conference underlined the imperative of respect for the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national unity of Afghanistan, and emphasized the necessity of cessation of foreign interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan.

The Conference reiterated the urgency of cessation of violence and armed hostilities, and called upon conflicting Afghan parties to refrain from resorting to force and to settle their differences by peaceful means through inter-Afghan negotiations for a durable political solution and the establishment of a broad-based government. In that context, the Conference endorsed the recent relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council, especially Security Council resolution 1076 (1996).

The Conference underlined its support for the commendable efforts of the United Nations and its Special Mission to Afghanistan, and those of other international organizations, in particular the Organization of the Islamic Conference, for the restoration of peace and tranquillity in Afghanistan. The participants declared their readiness to contribute effectively to these efforts aimed at arresting the internal conflict and commencing inter-Afghan dialogue for national reconciliation and the establishment of a broad-based government.

The Conference supported the decision of the Secretary-General of the United Nations to convene an international conference of States with interest and influence in Afghanistan aimed at a concerted and joint search for a political settlement in Afghanistan.

The Conference called upon all States and international organizations to extend all possible humanitarian assistance to the civilian population of Afghanistan and Afghan refugees.

The Conference decided to take appropriate follow-up measures at the regional level within the framework of the United Nations, with a view to actively pursuing ways and means of bringing about cessation of internal hostilities and facilitating the ongoing peacemaking efforts, in contact and collaboration with various Afghan groups, pertinent international organizations and States with interest and influence.

The Conference expressed its readiness to hold another meeting to review the latest developments in Afghanistan, assess the progress made in the implementation of this Declaration and consider ways and means of implementing, on the regional level, the decisions of the international conference to be held under the auspices of the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

The Conference participants expressed their gratitude and appreciation to the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran for convening the Regional Conference on Afghanistan and for the excellent arrangements.

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Fifty-first year

Letter dated 28 October 1996 from the Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the text of a statement issued on 28 October 1996 by the Presidency of the European Union on the subject of the situation in Afghanistan (see annex).

I would be grateful if you could have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 39, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) John H. F. CAMPBELL
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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ANNEX

[Original: English and French]

Statement issued on 28 October 1996 by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union on the situation in Afghanistan

The European Union is deeply concerned at the intensification of armed hostilities in Afghanistan. The European Union calls for the immediate cessation of these hostilities to prevent further destruction and loss of life, and strongly urges all parties to seek a peaceful settlement through negotiation that will ultimately result in a political solution that would bring peace and stability to Afghanistan.

The European Union fully supports the efforts of the United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan and calls upon all Afghan parties to cooperate closely with the Special Mission which is uniquely placed to act as an impartial mediator in the search for peace. In this context, the European Union welcomes the continuation of consultations by the Special Mission with neighbouring and other countries and regional institutions.

The European Union reaffirms its strong commitment to the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national unity of Afghanistan, and urges all States to refrain from interfering in the internal affairs of Afghanistan. In particular the flow of arms and ammunition into Afghanistan from outside its borders must end without delay. It also appeals to the Afghan parties to stop the use of landmines in view of the high number of innocent civilians falling victim to these weapons.

Of particular concern to the European Union is the widespread violation of human rights in Afghanistan, especially discrimination against women and girls. The European Union recalls, in this context, Security Council resolution 1076 (1996) in which the Council denounced such discrimination as well as other violations of human rights in Afghanistan. The European Union strongly urges the leaders of the various factions in Afghanistan to respect and act in accordance with the principles laid down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Charter of the United Nations, as well as all the other conventions on human rights to which Afghanistan is a signatory.

As one of the leading contributors of humanitarian aid to Afghanistan, the European Union is concerned about the possible repercussions of human rights violations on the beneficiaries of European Union relief programmes in Afghanistan. The European Union looks forward to a dialogue with all the parties concerned on cooperation modalities that aim to ensure the delivery of aid whilst maintaining the quality of support already provided to the people of Afghanistan, irrespective of their gender and ethnic background.

The European Union notes with concern that the continuation of the conflict in Afghanistan increases the potential for international terrorism and drug trafficking with destabilising effects for the region and beyond. The European Union therefore calls upon all parties in Afghanistan to halt such activities on Afghan soil.